



# CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER

## 24-HOUR REPORT

16 DECEMBER 2020

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### (U) CALIFORNIA

#### (U) Los Angeles – New Study Suggests California’s EDD Fraud Could Top \$8 Billion

(U) Unemployment insurance fraud in the state could top \$8 billion, according to a new study from the California Center for Jobs and the Economy. According to the report, billions of dollars in taxpayer funded benefits have gone to people who fraudulently filed claims and collected benefits, while many others have been unable to get much-needed financial relief. A previous media investigation found children as young as 1-year-old collecting benefits — with claims filed on their behalf stating that they were unemployed actors or fashion models. California prosecutors have found at least \$400 million in fraudulent claims filed on behalf of people who were incarcerated. In an effort to clamp down on fraud, the Employment Development Department shut down for two weeks to overhaul its system.

SOURCE: 15 December 2020, [CBS](#)

### (U) SOUTHWEST LAND BORDER

#### (U) California – 28 Arrested When Border Patrol Stops Two Suspected Smuggling Boats

(U) San Diego – Border Patrol agents arrested 28 people after discovering two suspected smuggling boats off San Diego’s coast within hours of each other, authorities said. Agents were told about a “suspicious vessel” near Coronado in San Diego Bay. Agents found 11 people onboard who had illegally entered the United States. Agents took the nine Mexican citizens, one Guatemalan citizen and one Salvadoran citizen to a Border Patrol station and processed them for removal. Shortly after the arrest, the Coast Guard notified Customs and Border Protection agents about a vessel off the coast of downtown San Diego. Agents soon found that 14 people had illegally entered the country and were working with three US citizens to move further into the country. Agents arrested the three US citizens on smuggling charges and processed the 12 Mexican citizens and two Guatemalan citizens for removal.

SOURCE: 15 December 2020, [FOX 5 News](#)

### (U) NATIONAL

#### (U) District of Columbia – Homeland Security, State Department Join List of Hacked Agencies

(U) Washington – The Department of Homeland Security, the State Department and the National Institutes of Health on Monday joined the list of known victims of a months-long, highly sophisticated digital spying operation by Russia whose damage remains uncertain but is presumed to be extensive, experts say. The list of victims of the cyberespionage, which already included the Treasury and Commerce departments, is expected to grow and to include more federal agencies and numerous private companies, said officials and others familiar with the matter. The DHS’s Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency on Monday issued an appeal for further information, asking anyone with knowledge of a breach to contact them.

SOURCE: 15 December 2020, [Anchorage Daily News](#)

#### (U) District of Columbia – Bahrain-Based Group Designated as Terrorist Organization

(U) Washington – The United States designated the Bahrain-based Saraya al-Mukhtar group as a

terrorist organization, accusing it of being backed by Iran and of having plotted attacks against US personnel in the Gulf Arab state. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Saraya al-Mukhtar, or Mukhtar Brigades, was designated for "posing a significant risk of committing acts of terrorism that threaten the national security and foreign policy of the United States." The group has plotted attacks against US personnel in Bahrain and has offered cash rewards for the assassination of Bahraini officials. This recent action will freeze any of the group's US assets and generally bars Americans from dealing with it.

SOURCE: 15 December 2020, [Reuters](#)

**(U) INTERNATIONAL**

**(U) Ethiopia – Suspected Chinese Hackers Stole Camera Footage from African Union**

(U) Addis Ababa – Acting on a tip from Japanese cyber researchers, the African Union's (AU) technology staffers discovered that a group of suspected Chinese hackers had rigged a cluster of servers in the basement of an administrative annex to quietly siphon surveillance videos from across the AU's sprawling campus in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital. The security breach was carried out by a Chinese hacking group nicknamed "Bronze President." The affected cameras covered AU offices, parking areas, corridors, and meeting rooms. Secureworks, an arm of Dell Technologies Inc which has been tracking Bronze President since 2018, confirmed that the malicious domain identified by Japan's CERT was linked to the hackers.

SOURCE: 16 December 2020, [Reuters](#)

**(U) France – At Least One of 14 Terror Suspects Found Guilty in 2015 Charlie Hebdo Attack**

(U) Paris – At least one of 14 terror suspects was convicted today in the 2015 Paris attack on the satirical weekly newspaper Charlie Hebdo and a kosher supermarket that killed 17 along with three gunmen, according to foreign media reports. Ali Riza Polat, described as the lieutenant of the virulently anti-Semitic market attacker Amédy Coulibaly, was the first to be found guilty of being complicit in acts of murder. The verdict comes after three months punctuated by new attacks, a wave of COVID-19 infections among the defendants, and testimony bearing witness to three days of bloodshed. Other outcomes from the closely-watched trial have yet to be announced.

SOURCE: 16 December 2020, [AJC](#)

**(U) Indonesia – Militant Linked to Bali Bombings Flown to Jakarta for Questioning**

(U) Jakarta – Indonesian authorities transferred 23 Islamic militants to the capital city of Jakarta for questioning, including one of the suspected bomb makers behind the 2002 attacks on the resort island of Bali. Zulkarnaen, thought to be one of the senior most members of al Qa'ida-linked militant group Jemaah Islamiah, was arrested on Sumatra island last week along with 22 others in a series of raids. Zulkarnean is believed to have been involved in making the bombs that were used in the Bali bombings that killed 202 people and the 2003 bombing of the J.W. Marriott hotel in Jakarta that killed 12 people. The ability of Zulkarnean to stay hidden for so long raises questions about whether the group has managed to remain a force and potentially regenerate.

SOURCE: 16 December 2020, [US News](#)

**(U) PREPARED BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER.**

**(U) FOR QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE EMAIL [STAC@CALOES.CA.GOV](mailto:STAC@CALOES.CA.GOV), OR CALL 916-636-2900.**